

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A device monitoring system connected with a plurality of devices via a network, wherein:

at least some of the plurality of devices are provided with a device monitoring function for:

monitoring each other for changes in state;

notifying each other of the changes in state; and

appointing a parent device by:

_____ detecting whether one of the plurality of devices has already been appointed the parent device, the one of the plurality of devices having started up first on the network; and

_____ if no parent device is detected in the detecting step, becoming the parent device;

sharing with each other information about the changes in state, and

wherein a the parent device selected in advance from among the devices on the network, creates a device management table, and distributes it to the other devices.

2. (Currently Amended) A device monitoring system connected with a plurality of devices via a network, wherein:

each of the plurality of devices is provided with a device monitoring function for:

monitoring each other for an abnormality;

notifying each other of the abnormality; ~~and~~

appointing a parent device by:

_____ detecting whether one of the plurality of devices has already been appointed the parent device, the one of the plurality of devices having started up first on the network; and

_____ if no parent device is detected in the detecting step, becoming the parent device;

sharing with each other information about the abnormality, and

wherein a the parent device selected in advance from among the devices on the network, creates a device management table, and distributes it to the other devices.

3. (Currently Amended) - A device monitoring system comprising a plurality of devices connected to a network and a device management server which manages the plurality of devices, wherein:

each of the plurality of devices is provided with a device monitoring function for:

monitoring each other for changes in state;

notifying at least one of the device management server and other devices among the plurality of devices of the changes in state; ~~and~~

appointing a parent device by:

_____ detecting whether one of the plurality of devices has already been appointed the parent device, the one of the plurality of devices having started up first on the network; and

if no parent device is detected in the detecting step, becoming the parent device;

sharing with each other information about the changes in state, and
wherein a the parent device selected in advance from among the devices on the network, creates a device management table, and distributes it to the other devices.

4. (Currently Amended) A device monitoring system comprising a plurality of devices connected to a network and a device management server which manages the plurality of devices, wherein:

each of the plurality of devices is provided with a device monitoring function for:

monitoring each other for an abnormality;

notifying the device management server and other devices among the plurality of devices of the abnormality; and

appointing a parent device by:

detecting whether one of the plurality of devices has already been appointed the parent device, the one of the plurality of devices having started up first on the network; and

if no parent device is detected in the detecting step, becoming the parent device;

sharing with each other information about the abnormality, and
wherein a the parent device selected in advance from among the devices on the network, creates a device management table, and distributes it to the other devices.

5. (Original) The device monitoring system according to claim 1, wherein all of the plurality of devices are provided with the device monitoring function.

6. (Previously Presented) The device monitoring system according to claim 1, wherein the device monitoring function comprises:

a device detecting section for recognizing an existence of other devices connected to the network;

a device management table creation section for creating a device management table for use in identifying a device to be monitored out of the recognized other devices;

a device management table storage section for storing the created device management table;

a status information detecting section for detecting status information about the monitoring device;

a status information transmission section for transmitting status information about the monitoring device and the another device to at least one of a third device of the plurality of devices and the device management server; and

a status information receiving section for receiving status information at least from any other device of the plurality of devices.

7. (Original) The device monitoring system according to claim 1, wherein the devices further comprise printers.

8-10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) A device monitoring method for a plurality of devices in a network comprising:

causing the plurality of devices to periodically monitor a state of each other; and

causing any of the plurality of devices which finds a change in the state of another of the plurality of devices to:

notify at least one of another device of the plurality of devices and a device management server about the change; and

appointing a parent device by:

detecting whether one of the plurality of devices has already been appointed the parent device, the one of the plurality of devices having started up first on the network; and

if no parent device is detected in the detecting step, becoming the parent device;

share information about the change with the plurality of devices, and

wherein a the parent device selected in advance from among the devices on the network, creates a device management table, and distributes it to the other devices.

12. (Currently Amended) A device monitoring method for a plurality of devices in a network comprising:

causing the plurality of devices to periodically monitor each other for abnormalities; and

causing any of the plurality of devices which finds an abnormality of another of the plurality of devices to:

notify at least one of another device of the plurality of devices and a device management server about the abnormality; and

appointing a parent device by:

detecting whether one of the plurality of devices has already been appointed the parent device, the one of the plurality of devices having started up first on the network; and

if no parent device is detected in the detecting step, becoming the parent device;

share information about the abnormality with the plurality of devices, and

wherein a the parent device selected in advance from among the devices on the network, creates a device management table, and distributes it to the other devices.

13. (Previously Presented) The device monitoring method according to claim 11, wherein:

the information includes log information about the monitored device.

14. (Original) The device monitoring method according to claim 11, wherein:

each of the devices monitors at least one of a logically close and physically close device.

15. (Original) The device monitoring method according to claim 11, wherein:

each of the devices monitors a functionally similar device.

16. (Original) The device monitoring method according to claim 11, wherein:

each of the devices monitors devices which differ by at least a certain time period of manufacture.

17. (Original) The device monitoring method according to claim 11, wherein:

each of the devices determines a device to be monitored according to a device management table created by a parent device.

18. (Original) The device monitoring method according to claim 17, wherein:

the device management table is created by the parent device according to device management method properties acquired from the device management server.

19. (Original) The device monitoring method according to claim 17, wherein:

the device which starts up first from among the plurality of devices in the network becomes the parent device.

20. (Previously Presented) The device monitoring method according to claim 17, wherein:

if the parent device experiences a shut down and stops operating, a device which detects the shut down functions as a new parent device.

21. (Previously Presented) The device monitoring method according to claim 17, wherein:

if the parent device shuts down, the first device that receives a shut-down notice from the parent device functions as a new parent device.

22. (Original) The device monitoring method according to claim 17, wherein:

an XML protocol is used as a data description format for a communications section among the devices and a communications section between the devices and the device management server.

23. (Previously Presented) The device monitoring method according to claim 17, wherein the devices comprise printers.

24. (Currently Amended) A network-connectable device comprising a device monitoring function for:

monitoring at least one other device among a plurality of devices in a network for changes in state;

notifying another device among the plurality of devices in the network of the changes in state of the at least one other device; and

appointing a parent device by:

detecting whether one of the plurality of devices has already been appointed the parent device, the one of the plurality of devices having started up first on the network; and

if no parent device is detected in the detecting step, becoming the parent device;

sharing with the another device information about the changes in state, and

wherein a the parent device selected in advance from among the devices on the network, creates a device management table, and distributes it to the other devices.

25. (Currently Amended) A network-connectable device comprising a device monitoring function for:

monitoring at least one other device among a plurality of devices in a network for an abnormality;

notifying another device among the plurality of devices in the network of the abnormality of the at least one other device; and

appointing a parent device by:

detecting whether one of the plurality of devices has already been appointed the parent device, the one of the plurality of devices having started up first on the network; and

if no parent device is detected in the detecting step, becoming the parent device;

sharing with the another device information about the abnormality, and

wherein a the parent device selected in advance from among the devices on the network, creates a device management table, and distributes it to the other devices.

26. (Currently Amended) The network-connectable device according to claim 24, wherein the network-connectable device further comprises a printer.